

# SCVO Workforce Survey 2015 report

## Key findings

**Despite very high levels of job satisfaction, many staff in the sector are feeling pressure due to high workloads and worries around job security and low pay.**

People working in the sector are overwhelmingly happy with aspects that are within our sector's control:

- the work itself, the people we support, the team work and camaraderie, the ability to make a real difference to people and communities, the autonomy, the ability to innovate and be flexible/responsive to needs, and supportive organisations with inclusive values.

The factors that are creating the greatest dissatisfaction are mainly external or financial pressures:

- low pay (often due to low rates paid by funders), funding cuts, increased demand, increased pressure on staff, unachievable targets, staff feeling they have to work extra hours, and the pressures created by short-term funding which lead to constant chasing of funds and wide-spread job insecurity.

## Headline figures

- 9 in 10 respondents were happy with the nature of their work
- 3 in 4 were happy about general job satisfaction, relationships with colleagues and relationships with employer.
- 2 in 5 respondents were unhappy about pay.
- 2 in 5 respondents were unhappy about job security
- 2 in 3 respondents were happy with the training they get and personal development opportunities, but only 1 in 3 were happy with careers progression opportunities
- 2 in 3 reported that their workloads had increased in the last year
- Over half of respondents feel overstretched at work, and half said that they work extra hours often or all the time
- 1 in 6 staff said they feel stressed most or all of the time
- 1 in 10 has taken time off due to stress
- Half of respondents plan to look for a new job in the coming year, mainly for better pay, better career prospects and more job security
- Respondents gave many reasons for loving working in the third sector, with half saying it's because they can make a real difference, and work with service users
- Respondents dislike the low pay, the insecurity of jobs, the funding cycles and the heavy workloads

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Key findings.....   | 1  |
| Headline figures.....   | 1  |
| 1    Methodology .....  | 4  |
| 1.1    Primary research: Survey.....                                  | 4  |
| 1.2    Secondary research .....                                       | 4  |
| 2    Results .....  | 5  |
| 2.1    Satisfaction levels .....                                      | 5  |
| 2.2    Pay levels.....  | 7  |
| 2.3    Cost of living increases .....                                 | 8  |
| 2.4    Living wage .....  | 9  |
| 2.5    Employee benefits.....   | 10 |
| 2.6    Workload.....  | 13 |
| 2.7    Stress.....  | 14 |
| 2.8    Contracts.....   | 15 |
| 2.9    Future plans .....   | 16 |
| 2.10    Staff turnover .....  | 19 |
| 2.11    Attitudes to working in the third sector .....                | 20 |
| 3    Best and worst aspects of working in third sector .....          | 21 |
| 3.1    Best aspects of working in the third sector .....              | 22 |
| 3.1.1    being able to make a real difference to people's lives ..... | 22 |
| 3.1.2    the clients that they work with.....                         | 22 |
| 3.1.3    Variety of work.....   | 22 |
| 3.1.4    Independence and autonomy .....                              | 23 |
| 3.1.5    Colleagues and team-working .....                            | 23 |
| 3.1.6    Supportive organisations and good working conditions.....    | 24 |
| 3.1.7    Third sector 'values' .....                                  | 24 |
| 3.2    Worst aspects of working in the third sector.....              | 25 |
| 3.2.1    Low pay .....  | 25 |
| 3.2.2    Job security .....   | 25 |
| 3.2.3    Short-term or temporary contract issues.....                 | 26 |
| 3.2.4    Funding pressures.....                                       | 26 |
| 3.2.5    Large workloads, long hours.....                             | 27 |
| 3.2.6    Difficult, challenging work .....                            | 28 |
| 3.2.7    Bureaucracy and unrealistic targets .....                    | 28 |

|        |   |    |
|--------|---|----|
| 3.2.8  | Poor career progression and little investment in staff development..... | 28 |
| 3.2.9  | Management and leadership concerns.....                                 | 29 |
| 3.2.10 | Undervalued by stakeholders and partners .....                          | 29 |
| 4      | Respondent profile .....  | 30 |
| 4.1    | Respondent Roles.....   | 30 |
| 4.2    | Gender .....  | 31 |
| 4.3    | Respondents' field of work .....  | 32 |
| 4.4    | Size of organisation.....   | 33 |
| 5      | Appendix – About the Third Sector's Workforce .....                     | 34 |
| 5.1    | The sector's people .....   | 34 |
| 5.2    | What does the paid workforce look like? .....                           | 34 |
| 5.3    | Where do paid staff work? .....   | 35 |
| 5.4    | The third sector's top 20 employers .....                               | 37 |

# 1 Methodology

## 1.1 Primary research

This research briefing is based on a survey of the third sector workforce, the first sector-wide survey of employees to be carried out since 1999, and the first time that employees across the whole of the third sector have had the opportunity to say how they feel about their jobs. The workforce survey was open from Friday 23 January to Monday 9 February 2015.

The survey was circulated through many channels to ensure a wide range of respondents:

- SCVO members bulletin
- Cascaded to intermediaries, and included in a number of e-bulletins, eg VHS
- Shared by SCVO staff to networks and friends working in the third sector
- Goodmoves jobs bulletin and banner on website
- A Facebook advert targeted at charity workers

**1,020 responses were received in total, of which 900 contained enough detail to be included in analysis:**

- 889 responses were from people who currently work in the third sector
- 11 responses were from people who have previously worked in the third sector

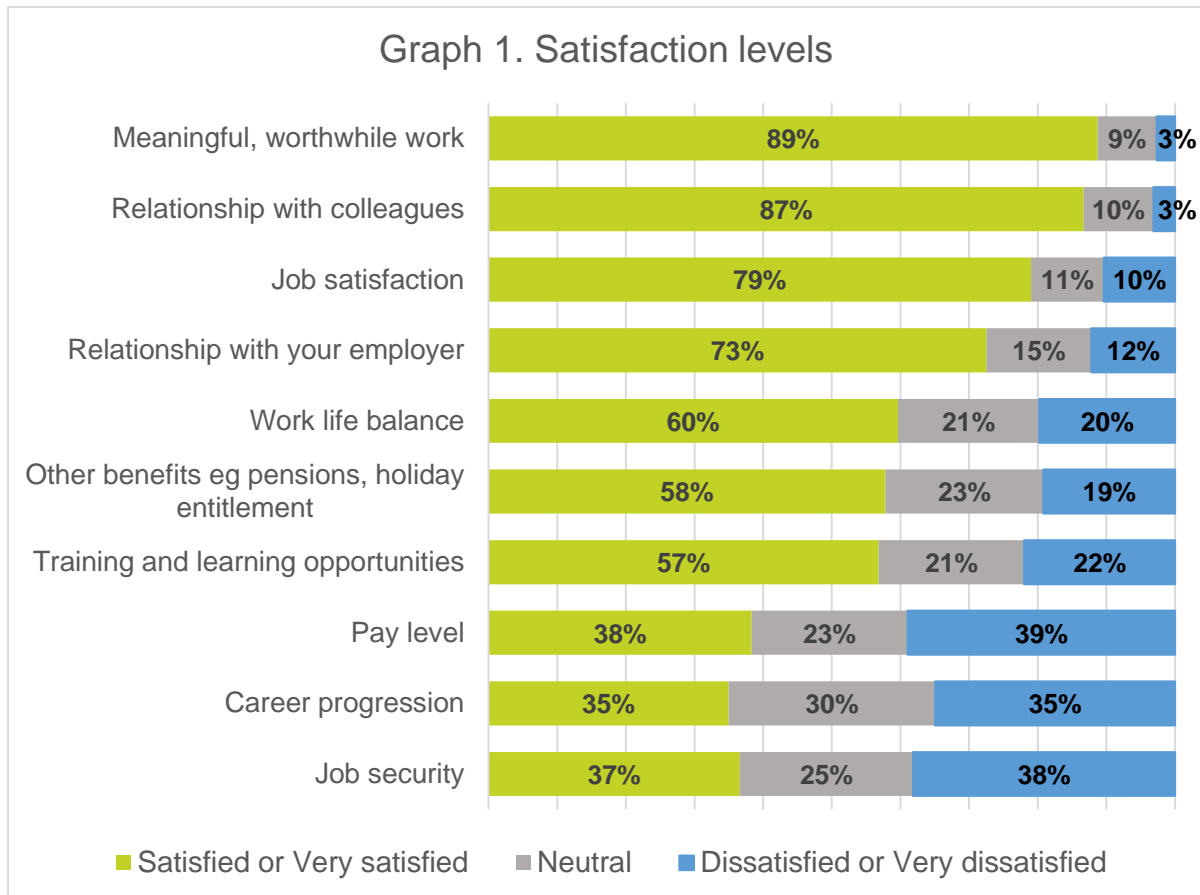
## 1.2 Secondary research

Additional data and intelligence has been pulled in from a range of sources, including:

- SCVO research briefings: [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)
- OSCR charity register data: [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)
- Goodmoves: [www.goodmoves.org.uk](http://www.goodmoves.org.uk)
- Annual Population Survey:  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/Local-Authority-Tables>
- Workplace Employment Relations Study (ONS):  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-2011-workplace-employment-relations-study-wers>

## 2 Results

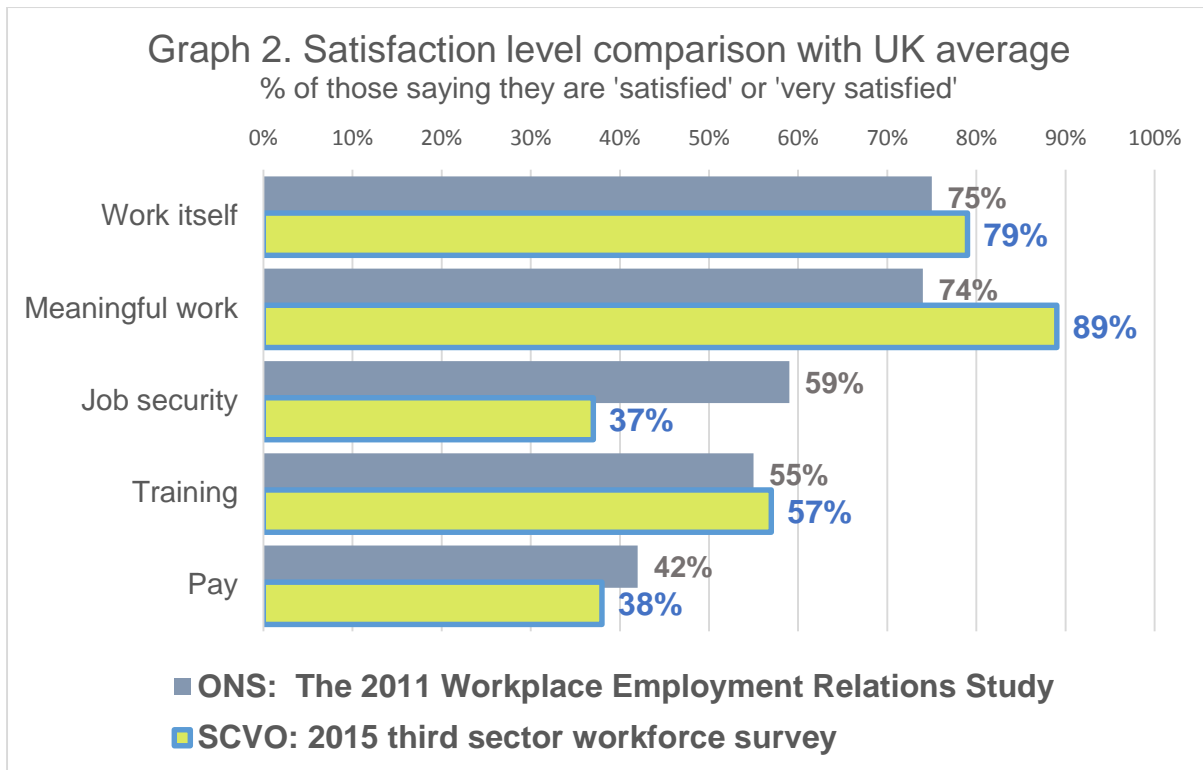
### 2.1 Satisfaction levels



Respondents were hugely positive about many elements of their work:

- 9 in 10 respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with having meaningful, worthwhile work. Half of respondents (51%) said they were very satisfied with this aspect of their work.

This is far higher than the national average found by the Workplace Employment Relations Study (last carried out in 2011) – see graph 2 below.



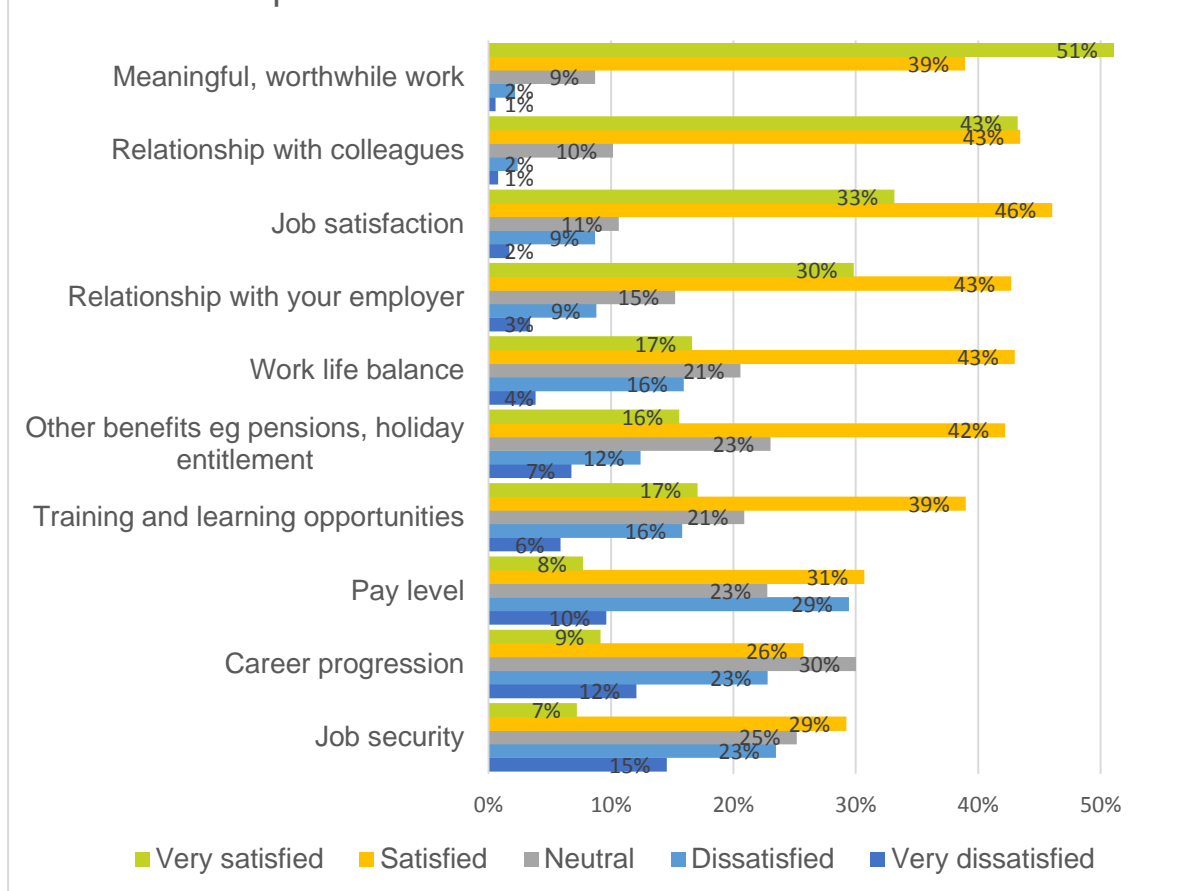
- 3 out of 4 respondents also said they were satisfied or very satisfied with general job satisfaction, relationships with colleagues and relationships with employer.
- 60% were positive about their work-life balance, although only 17% of respondents said that they were 'very satisfied' with their work life balance.

This is perhaps surprising in a sector that makes much of its work-life balance values. To better understand this, responses were cross-tabulated against other questions, and strong correlations were found with other areas. Those whose workloads have increased in the last year and those who often work extra unpaid hours reported being significantly less satisfied with their work/life balance.

- 2 in 5 respondents deemed pay levels as unsatisfactory, with 39% saying they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with pay. Respondents' views on their pay are similar (if slightly less positive) to those found in the 2011 Workplace Employment Relations Study (WRES) in graph 2 above.
- More notably 2 in 5 respondents were dissatisfied (23%) or very dissatisfied (15%) with job security – see graph 3 below. Only 37% of third sector staff said that they were happy with their job security. This is significantly lower than the UK average of 59% (see graph 2).

Other areas of concern were the low levels of satisfaction with career progression opportunities, and with training and learning opportunities.

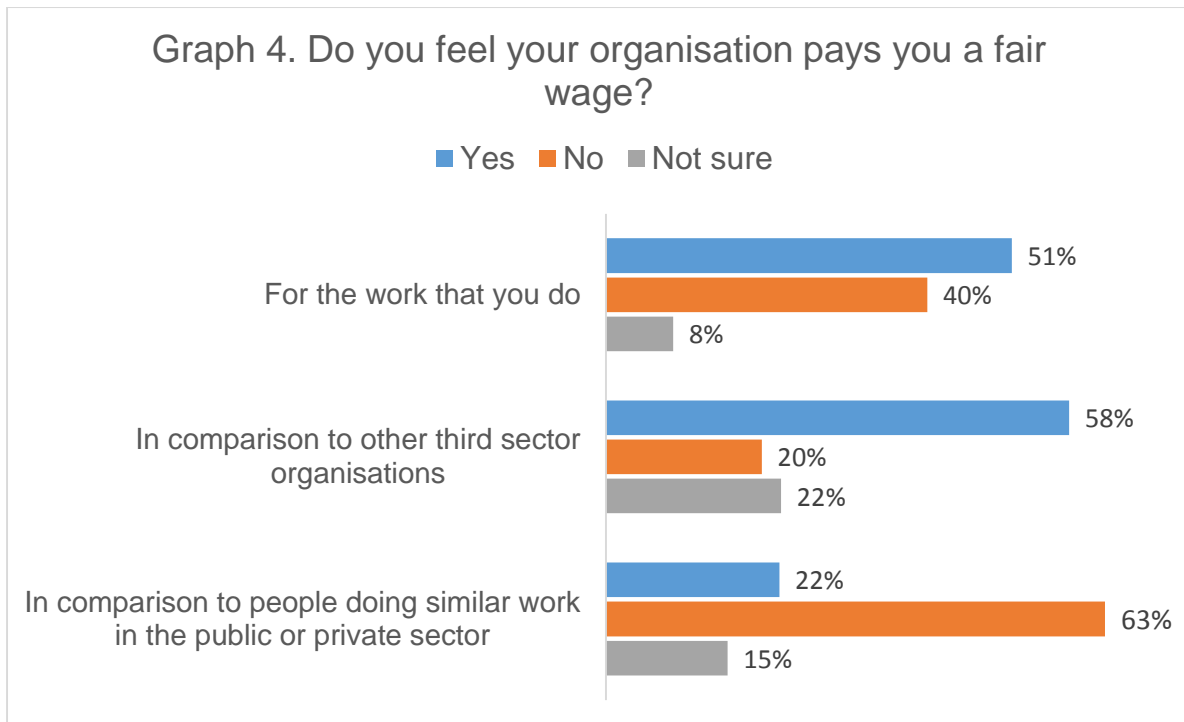
Graph 3. Satisfaction levels: detailed breakdown



## 2.2 Pay levels

Graph 4 below shows that while nearly 2 out of 3 respondents feel that they are paid a fair wage in comparison to other third sector organisations, only 1 in 2 think they are actually paid a fair wage for the work they do.

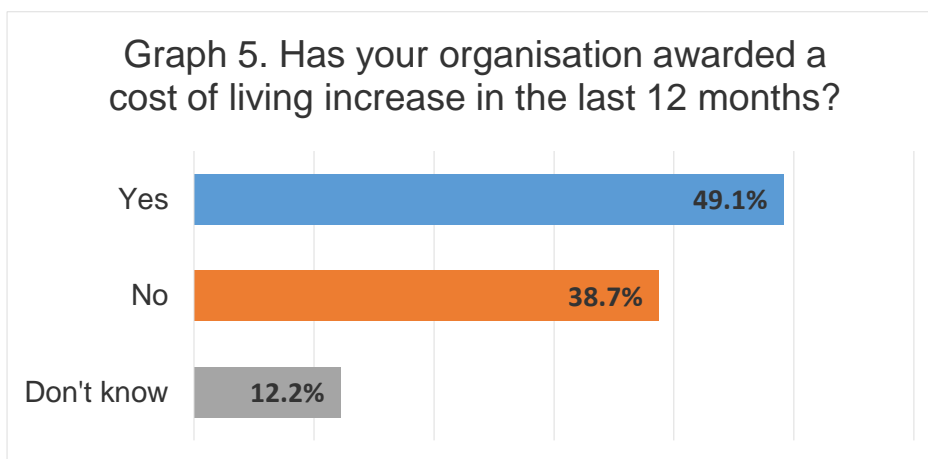
Furthermore, 2 out of 3 respondents think they are paid lower wages than people doing similar work in other sectors.



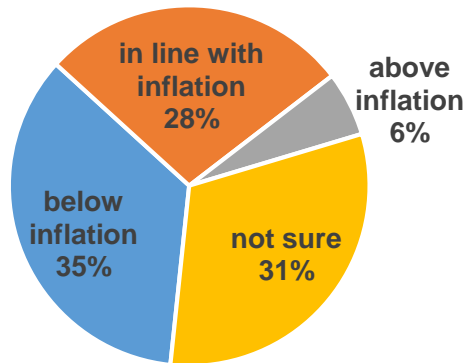
## 2.3 Cost of living increases

Cost of living rises are often awarded to staff to ensure that pay keeps up with inflation. Half of respondents had been awarded a cost of living increase in the last year (graph 5).

- Just over 1 in 3 of these respondents had been awarded increases below inflation
- 1 in 3 had received an increase either in line (28%) or above inflation (6%)
- The other third were not sure how the increase compared with inflation.



Graph 6. Was the cost of living award...

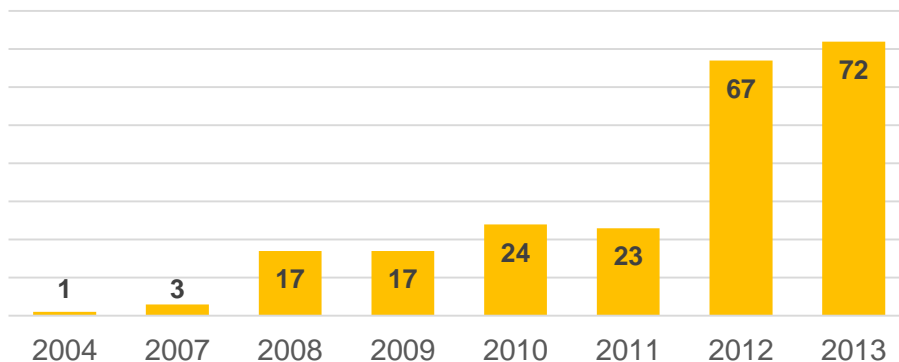


However, 335 respondents (almost 2 in 5) said that they had not been awarded a cost in the last year. While the majority had received increases in either 2012 or 2013, a high number reported that they had seen no increases in over 3 years – see graph 7.

- 37 respondents reported that their last cost of living increase was in 2009 or earlier.

Graph 7. Year of last cost of living increase

Note: Dates supplied by 224 out of the 335 who have not had a cost of living increase in last year



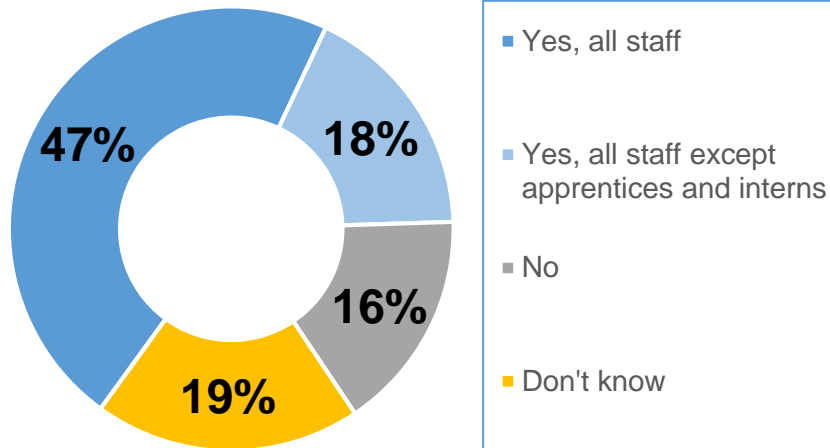
## 2.4 Living wage

Around half of respondents said their organisation pays all staff at least the living wage. 18% pay all staff except apprentices and interns the living wage.

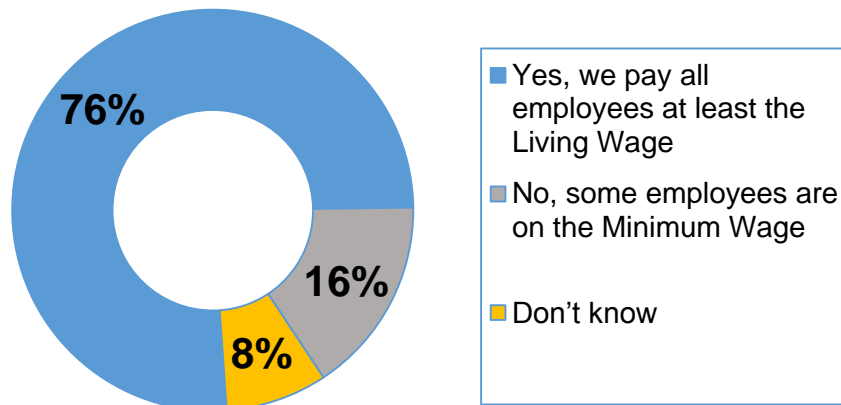
- Only 1 in 6 respondents said their organisations does **not** pay the living wage.

However, despite increased awareness of and support for the living wage within the third sector, the overall figures do not compare well with SCVO's state of the sector survey 2 years ago, where 76% of respondents said they pay the living wage. The drop may be due to different respondent profiles – see graphs 8 and 9.

Graph 8. Does your organisation pay all staff above the Living Wage?



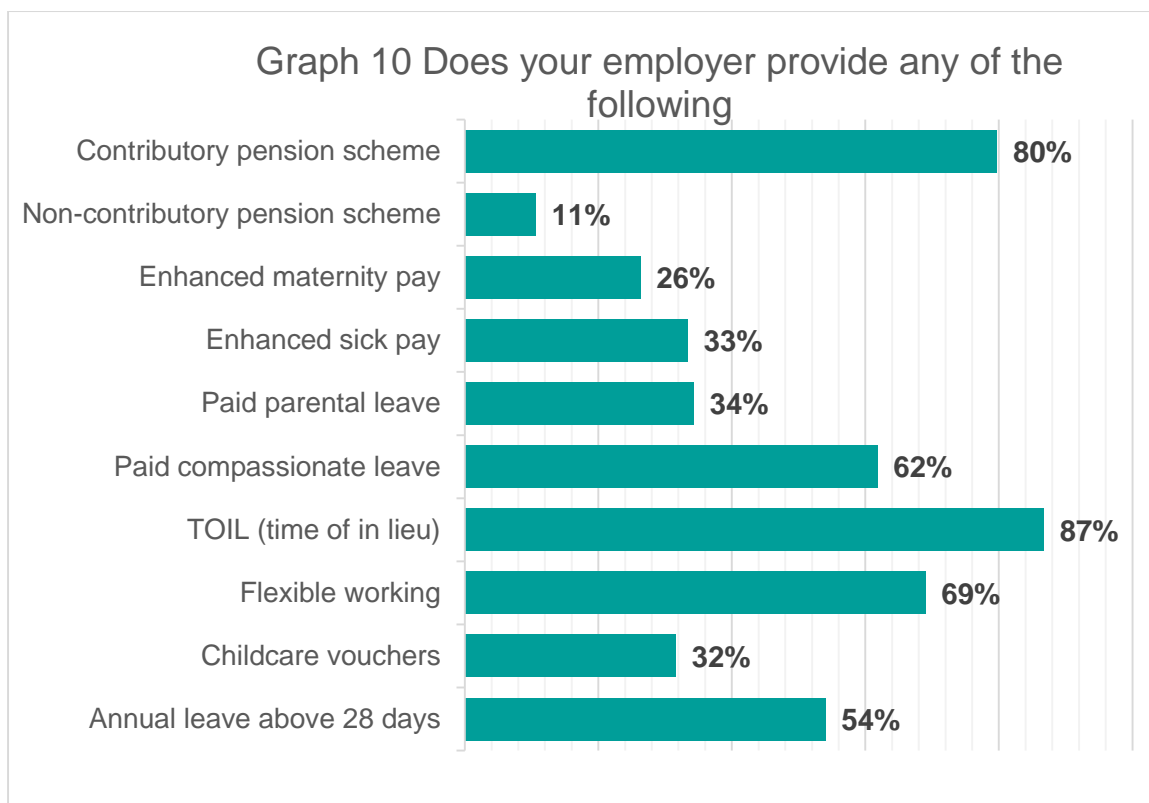
Graph 9. 2013 Sector Forecast: does your organisation pay the Living Wage?



## 2.5 Employee benefits

4 in 5 respondents said that their third sector employer provides a contributory pension scheme. Some respondents felt their employer's contributions (3% cited by several) are too low. Those without noted that *"lack of pension a real worry."*

*"My organisation supports lone parents yet has refused requests from staff who are lone parents themselves to work flexibly. TOIL is only to be used in exceptional circumstances and must be approved before you actually build up the hours. They do not provide a pension, and under auto enrolment will not have to until 2016/17. I think it is a shame they have not chosen to be more proactive and sign up until they absolutely must."*



Other common benefits were often non-financial – most employers ran a TOIL (Time Off In Lieu) system, and offered flexible working, along with annual leave above the statutory minimum of 28 days.

Other benefits were either provided by fewer employers, or as many respondents pointed out, may exist but respondents were either new to the job or not sure if benefits did not directly affect them, eg parent-related benefits.

Respondents were asked about other benefits, with some mentioning paternity leave and one respondent suggesting that fathers should get 2 weeks full pay instead of just one.

Several respondents also highlighted positive practices and more general support:

*“Organisation has always been very willing to support staff both in the ways listed above and in more personal, individual ways”*

*“Organisation is very flexible & supportive to individual needs of its workers, and recognises the importance of looking after its workers.”*

However, others expressed concerns around benefits. Several respondents felt that organisations did not always advertise benefits widely: *“Organisation keeps quiet about a lot of the benefits so unless you know to ask you dont know about them.”*

On the other hand, some respondents admitted that they could take more responsibility for this: *“I’m not aware of all the benefits we have available, but that’s my own fault. The information is there for me to look at if I choose to.”*

More concerning was that a number of people felt that some benefits, particularly if left up to a manager's discretion, were unevenly applied, often leading to tensions: *"2 members of staff receive sick pay, paid holidays and budget for external supervision... Others doing same job don't receive this creating an inequality within the team."*

*"Never consistent in rules - some people given paid compassionate leave, others having to take it from their annual leave - you either have benefits for everyone or not at all."*

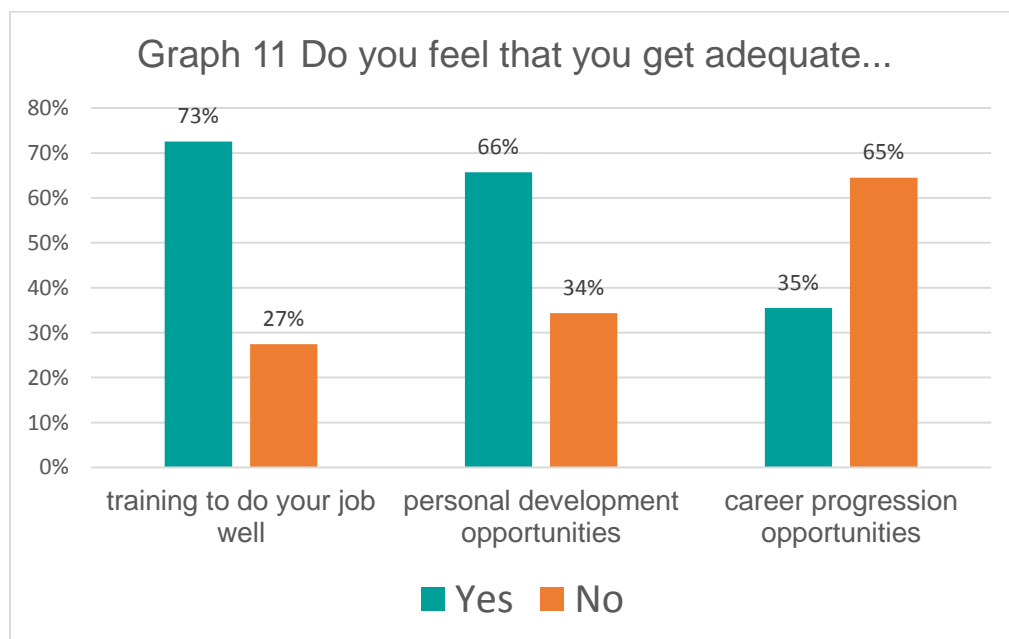
*"TOIL is limited to certain individual and varies greatly according to service and manager."*

Often the reason respondents gave for missing out on employee benefits was due to temporary or zero-hours contracts:

*"People with proper contracts receive all the above ticked. I on a temp zero hours contract only get flexible working and non-contributory pension."*

Another area of concern for respondents was that their organisations were too small to be able to afford generous benefits:

*"We are a small organisation on a very tight budget and we cannot afford a generous package to people on long term sick. As a person in their 50's this does worry me. If anything were to happen with my health I couldn't expect the organisation to support me for much longer than the statutory minimum [...] If I was ill we would have to sell our house."*

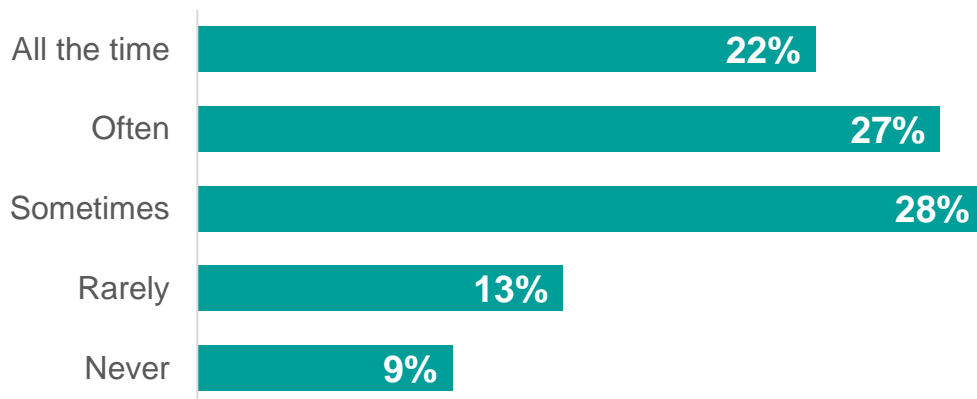


- 3 in 4 respondents felt that they get adequate training, and 2 in 3 thought they got adequate personal development opportunities
- 2 in 3 did not feel that there were adequate career progression opportunities. This was not just the case for those working for small organisations, as this issue seemed to concern those working in larger organisations equally.

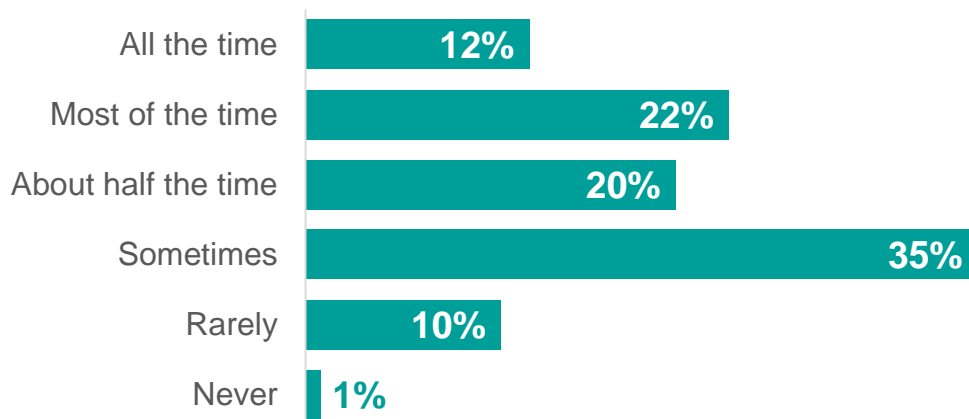
## 2.6 Workload

- 1 in 2 staff reported working extra unpaid hours 'often' or 'all the time' with 1 in 5 saying they do this all the time. Some respondents felt that there is culture within the sector that expects staff to work beyond contracted hours for free.
- Over 1 in 2 staff (54%) reported feeling overstretched at work half the time or more, with 1 in 10 saying they feel overstretched all the time.

Graph 12 Do you ever work extra unpaid hours?

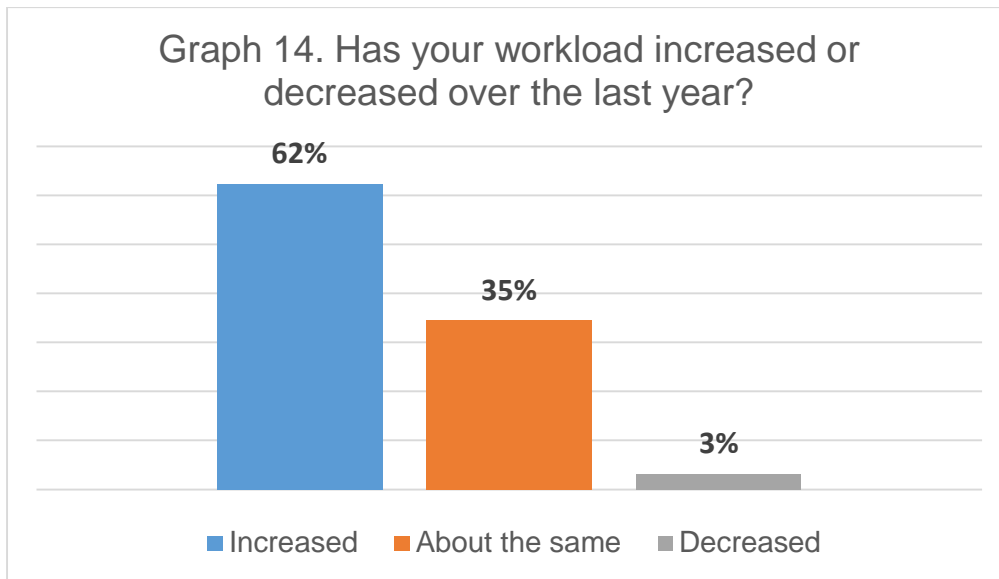


Graph 13. Do you ever feel over-stretched at work?



- Nearly 2 in 3 staff reported that their workload had increased in the last year

- 1 in 3 reported that workloads had remained about the same, and only 3% of respondents reported a decrease.



Reasons given for increased workloads fell into 4 main categories:

- Staff who have left, were made redundant or are on sick leave are not being replaced
- Increased demand for services and more referrals
- Organisations are taking on more work and developing new projects, but without adequate staff
- Funders, including public sector, demanding higher targets

Comments included:

*“Staff leaving and not being replaced”*

*“restructure. Went from a team of three to one!”*

*“Covering staff sickness. Not enough people willing to work for this wage”*

*“More responsibility as head office has cut back their staff”.*

*“New projects taken on, but not extra staff”*

*“Constantly short of 'hands' to deliver the level of service that we aspire to”*

*“Seeking funding for the organisation has taken up a lot of time”*

*“Organisation taking on new projects, staff turnover meaning the need to cover for colleagues as well as spending time on recruitment.”*

*“More work expected under Service Level Agreement with Council”*

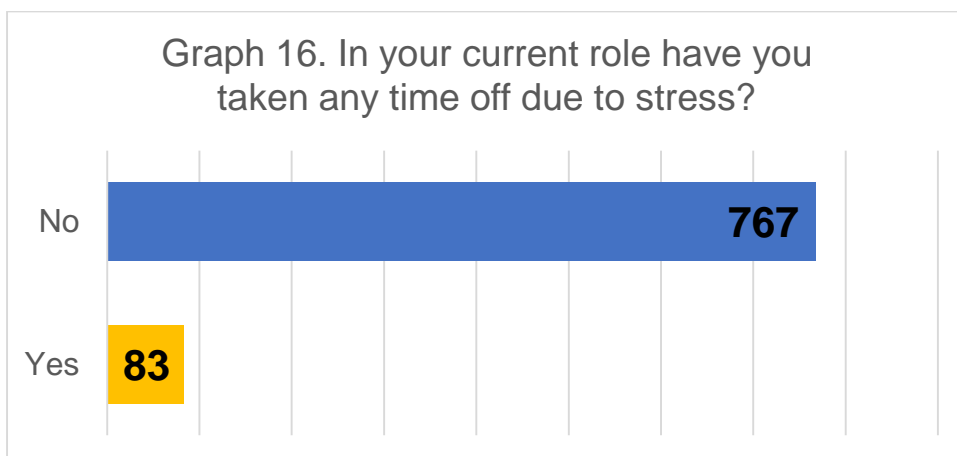
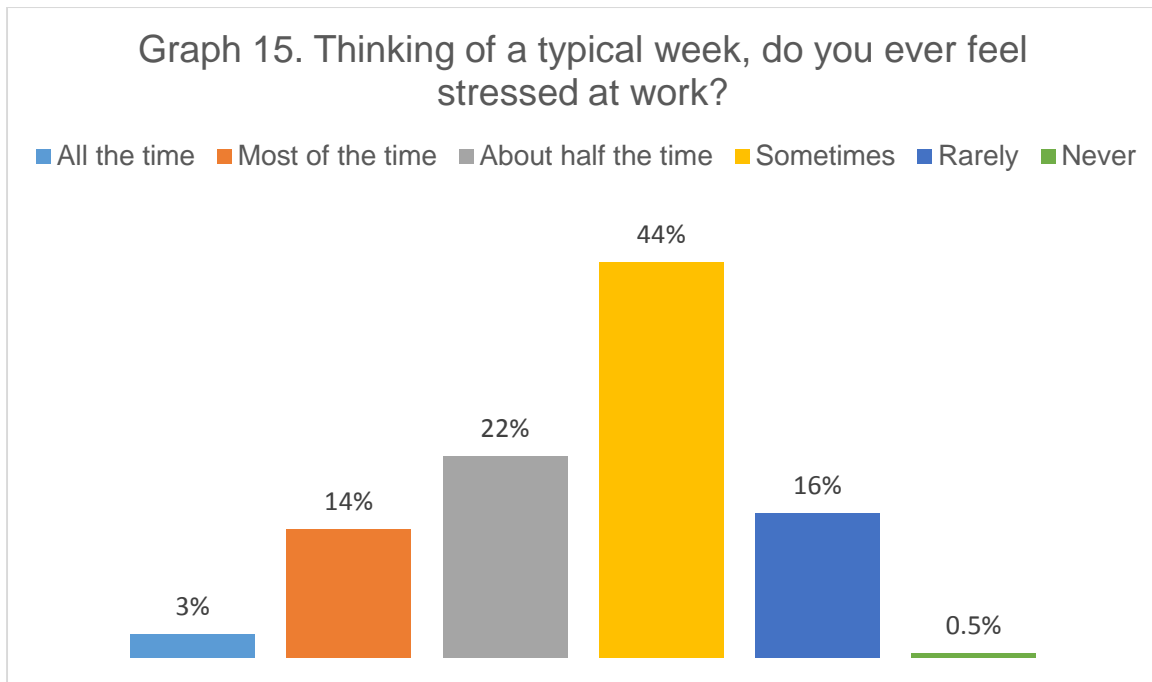
*“More demand on services due to council cuts.”*

*“pressure to be doing more and more in order to be seen as invaluable to the council. Also increased referrals to our service.”*

## 2.7 Stress

1 in 3 staff reported feeling stressed at least half of the time, with 1 in 6 saying they feel stressed all or most of the time (see graph 15).

1 in 10 reported having taken time off from their current role due to stress (graph 16).



## 2.8 Contracts

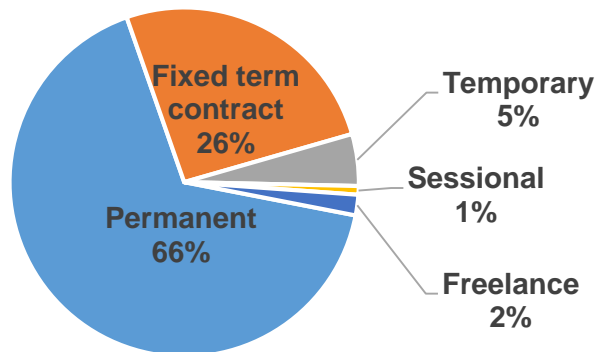
- 72% of respondents to the survey work full-time, 28% part-time.

This is roughly similar to the Annual Population Survey, which estimates the third sector workforce as 65% full-time, 35% part-time.

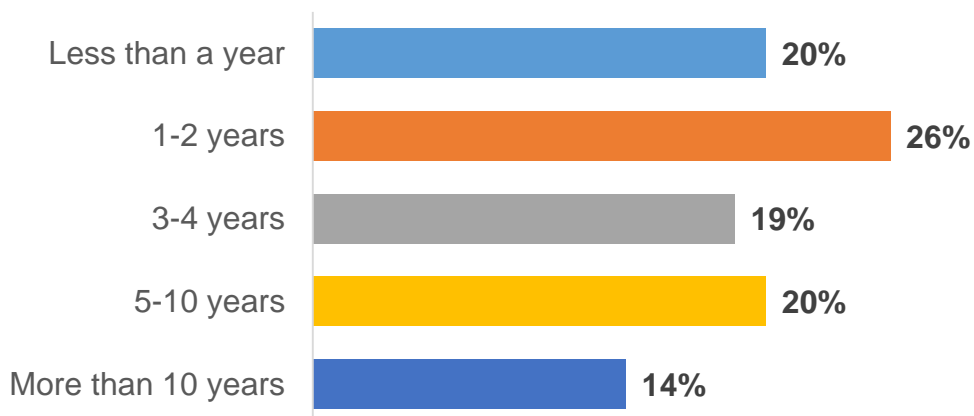
- Of the part-time respondents, 3 in 10 would like to work more hours.

Two thirds of respondents were on permanent contracts, 26% were on fixed-term, with the remainder a mix of sessional, temporary and freelance.

Graph 17. What type of contract are you currently on?



Graph 18. How long have you worked in your current role?

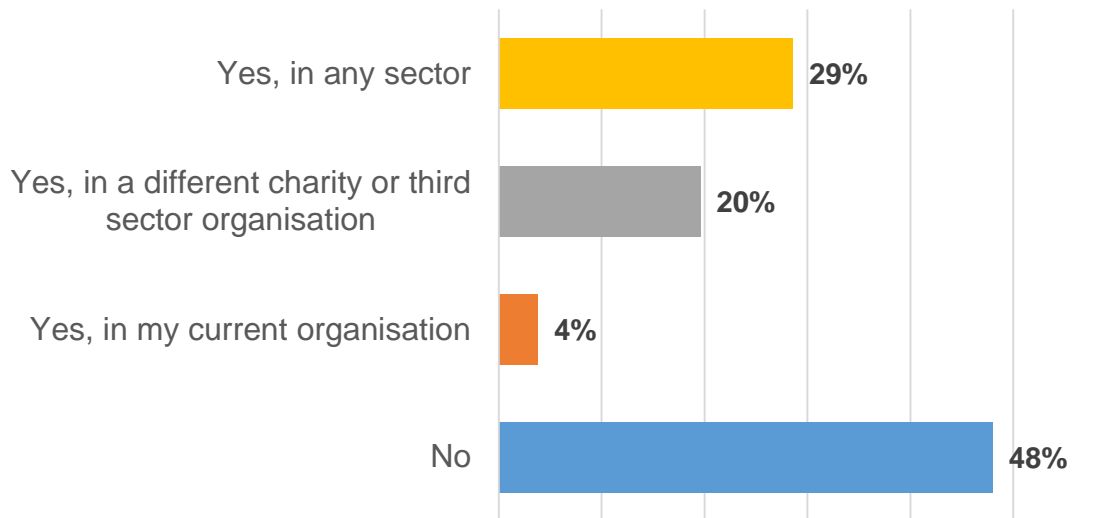


## 2.9 Future plans

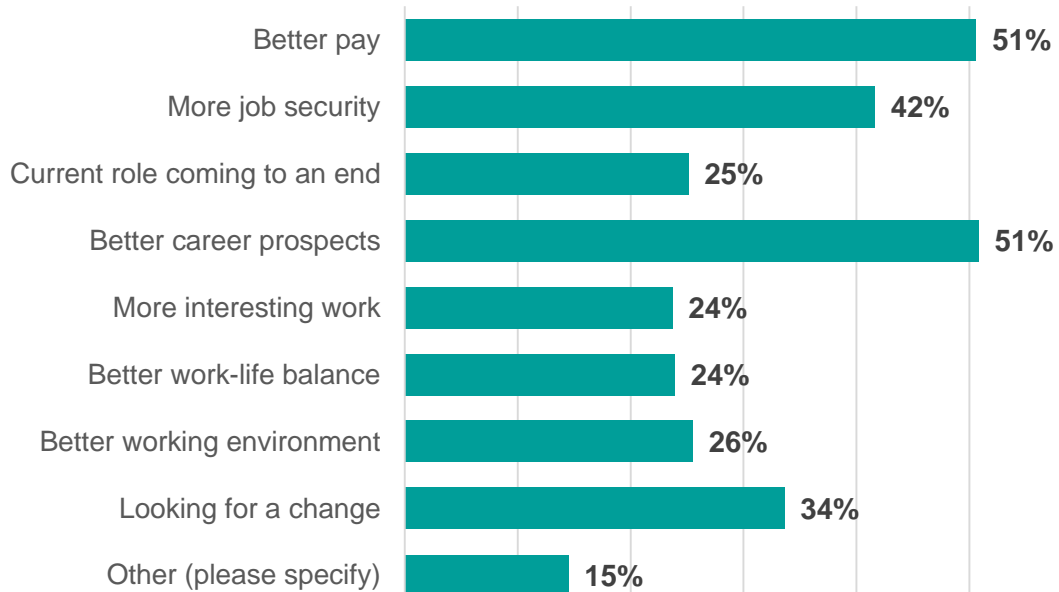
1 in 2 respondents say they are looking for a new job in next year, with 49% looking to change organisation.

This is far higher than figures found in surveys of other sectors. A survey by the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) found that 1 in 3 are looking to change jobs. Their survey suggested that 37% of workers and managers plan to leave their current jobs, a significant increase on 2014 (19%) and 2013 (13%).

Graph 19. Are you currently looking for a new job, or planning to over the next 12 months?



Graph 20. Reasons for looking for a new job



The main reasons for leaving are better pay and improved career prospects, which were cited by 1 in 2 of those wanting to change jobs.

Other key factors were:

- more job security (42%)
- Roles coming to an end (25%)
- Simply looking for a change (34%).

Under 'Other' reasons, respondents mentioned:

- Redundancy
- Feeling under-valued
- Clashes with management, particularly new managers
- Clashes with boards

Unsurprisingly, there is a strong correlation between those who are looking to change jobs and satisfaction with current job.

Those looking to change jobs scored lower on all aspects of job satisfaction, most noticeably:

- Overall job satisfaction
  - job security
  - pay
  - career progression
  - training and learning opportunities
- While 62% of those not planning to change jobs think they are paid a fair wage for the work they do, 61% of those looking for a job in any sector do not think they are.

Those looking to change jobs were far less likely to have had a cost of living award in last 12 months. They were also far less likely to feel they get:

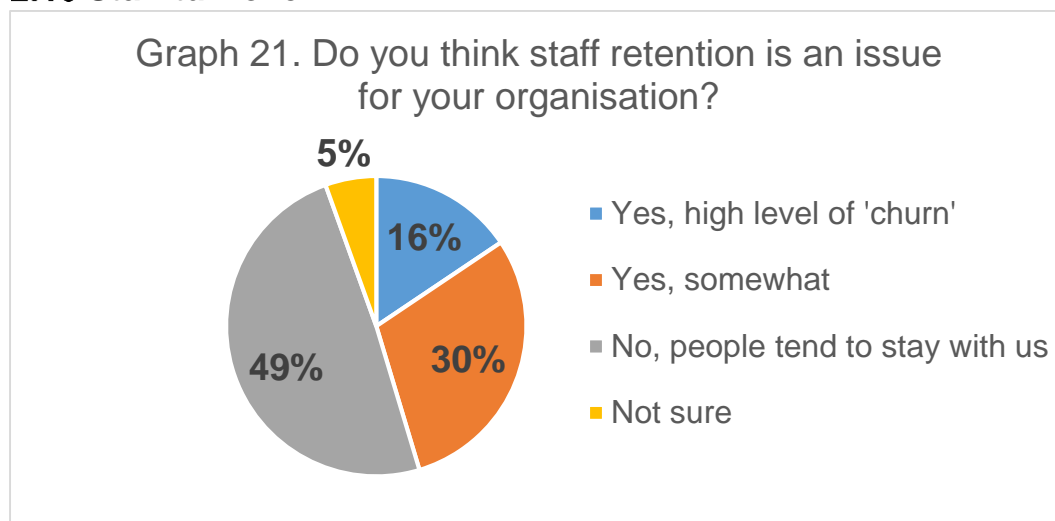
- adequate training
- personal development opportunities
- and most of all career progression opportunities

There were no significant differences around unpaid additional hours or workload, but those seeking a change did report higher stress levels.

Permanent staff were far less likely to be looking for a new job than those on temporary or fixed term contracts.

Those looking to change jobs were also more likely to think that their organisation will see staff levels drop.

## 2.10 Staff turnover



30% of respondents thought that staff retention was sometimes an issue for their organisation, and 16% thought it was often an issue, with high levels of churn:

*We seem to lose the really good people! Bright young things build up skills and then leave*

*Some people, particularly younger people starting a family, may be anxious about the uncertainty of funding and whether their job will continue*

*Lots of short term only funding means there is turnover but people generally look to stay within the organisation*

*People can't plan anything in their life with the uncertainty of funding in the third sector - no stability.*

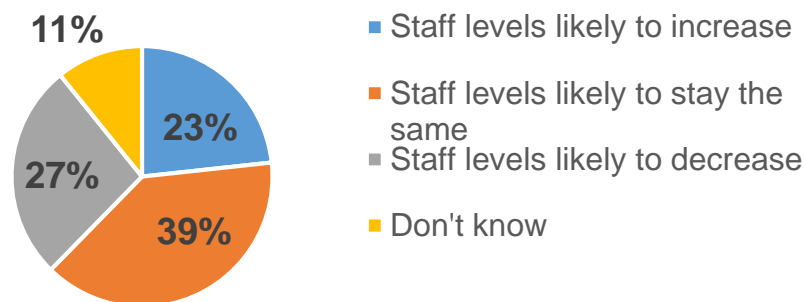
*We are probably not really high in relation to some places, but it used to be very stable and over the last couple of years this has shot up (and reasons for leaving are on the whole negative). Also we seem to be employing a lot of agency, temporary roles and consultants on short term contracts.*

However, several respondents did observe that some level of staff movement is healthy for an organisation. Others noted that many organisations have very little movement the closer you get to the top, with one wishing there was more 'churn'.

- **1 in 4 respondents thought that staffing levels in their organisation would decrease – see graph 22 below.**

A similar number thought levels would increase, while 2 in 5 thought levels would stay about the same.

Graph 22. Over the next 12 months, do you think staff numbers in your organisation will go up or down?



## 2.11 Attitudes to working in the third sector

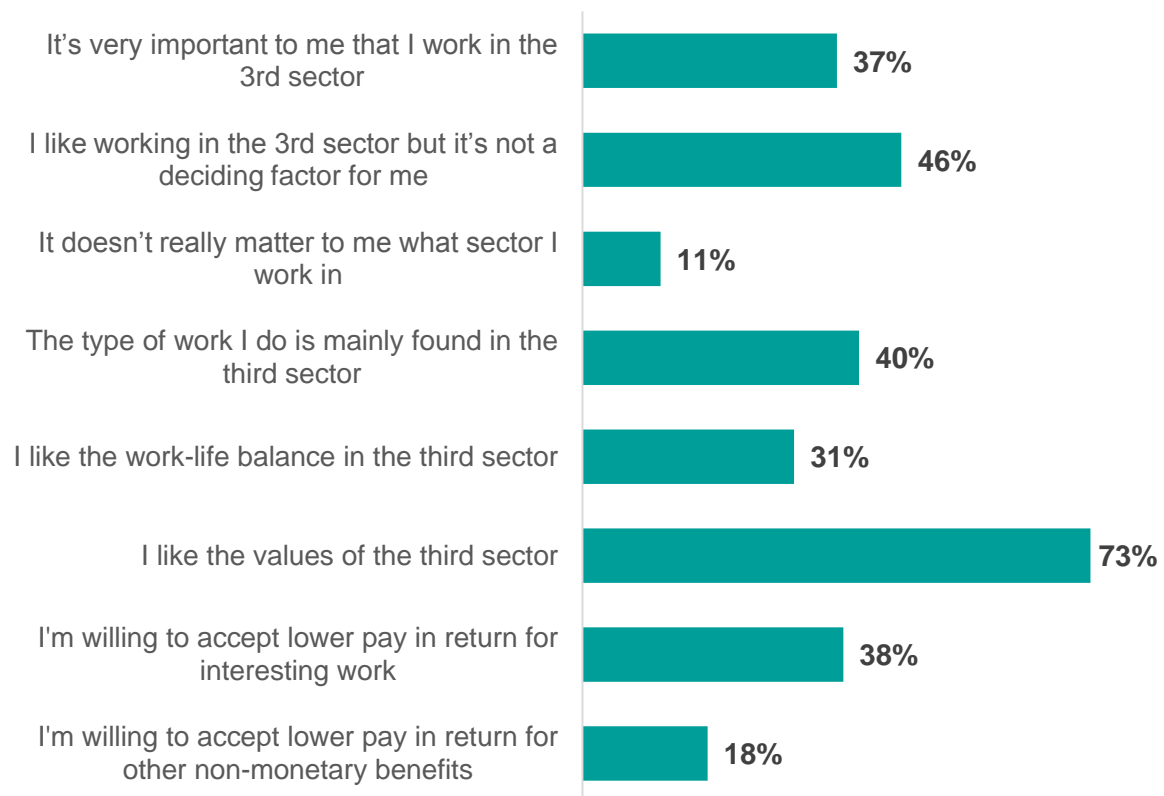
**3 in 4 respondents like the values of the third sector, and only 1 in 10 felt that it doesn't matter to them which sector they work in.**

Although 1 in 3 said they were willing to accept lower pay for interesting work, most respondents felt that they should be paid the going rate for their work, regardless of whether they work in the third sector or not:

*I think staff in the charity sector need a real passion for what they do to make the "challenges" of the sector worthwhile. The pay is certainly much lower than similar posts in the private or public sector (I have worked in all sectors in a financial management role but have specialised in third sector).*

*Ironically, well-paid managers seem to expect those on the bottom rung of the wages scale to be prepared to work for the love of it, since they're providing a service to 'those less fortunate'.*

Graph 23. Attitudes to working in the third sector



### 3 Best and worst aspects of working in third sector

#### Why we love working in the third sector...

1. Feeling that we are making a real difference to people and communities (40%)
2. The people we support (31%)
3. Our colleagues, and working in a great team (22%)
4. The variety of the work – no two days are the same (20%)
5. The autonomy – independence to be flexible and try out new ideas (15%)
6. The ethos of the sector (15%)

#### And why we don't...

1. Low pay, and feeling undervalued (18%)
2. No or low job security (16%)
3. Funding cuts and financial pressures (11%)
4. Large workloads and long hours (10%)
5. Poor career progression and no investment in staff development (8%)
6. Management and leadership concerns (4%)
7. Bureaucracy and inappropriate targets (3%)

### **3.1 Best aspects of working in the third sector**

Almost half of respondents said that the best aspect of their job was either

#### **3.1.1 Being able to make a real difference to people's lives**

##### **3.1.2 Working with clients**

1 in 5 respondents (20%) said it was a combination of these two elements.

Comments included:

*The times when I \*know\* that I made a real positive difference to someone's life through my work, and can see the result directly*

*The variety, stimulation and satisfaction related to making real changes happen for people and Scotland.*

*When I speak to customers/clients and they tell me how our services and volunteers have made such a difference to them*

*Being able to do something that matters and that has a profound impact on the lives of people less fortunate than myself.*

*job satisfaction in relation to end of life care and being able to make a difference to someone's quality of life rather than quantity.*

*The support we offer to the service users and seeing them heal and progress with their lives*

*Giving a young person the support and skills to go forward with their lives*

*I enjoy so much about my job, but number one is knowing we are helping people to change their lives at their own pace.*

*Making a difference! Seeing young people with disabilities to go out and do the same activities as their peers!*

#### **3.1.3 Variety of work**

1 in 10 praised the variety of the work they do. This variety was often due to the nature of the work carried out, with many respondents enjoying working on new projects and with a wide range of clients or partner organisations. Others also mentioned that the nature of their jobs meant that they were 'not stuck in an office' but were able to get out and about to meet service users and clients. Sometimes variety was linked to working for smaller organisations (which dominate in the third sector) with many staff having to wear a number of hats and carry out multiple functions.

Comments included:

*I love the flexibility and the range of work I do. you don't know what is going to happen one day to the next*

*I enjoy the challenges I deal with . I enjoy the variety of the work and the people I have to deal with although these can all be very demanding..*

*Variety, working with people in the community and not being stuck in an office all the time*

### **3.1.4 Innovation**

A large number of respondents also highlighted the ability to develop new ideas, try out innovate solutions and be creative, sometimes simply due to organisations being smaller and more agile, with less bureaucracy:

*The shared values of the staff team. The opportunity for creativity, looking at issues from a different perspective and to be able to offer my views on the daily running of this service.*

*My role allows me to share so called third sector approaches in a clinical environment thus building respect for my field.*

*Belief in what we do; that our work can improve the lives of our client group; some sense of ownership over what I do (not micro managed); I work in an innovative and creative workplace that is not stuffy or corporate.*

*Fantastic organisation, with a great sense of creativity. Am allowed to be very autonomous*

### **3.1.5 Independence and autonomy**

A further important aspect for many respondents was the level of independence they have to get on with work without the restrictive layers of bureaucracy and red tape found in other organisations or sectors – 25 separate respondents used the word “autonomy”. Again, while many felt that they have higher levels of control over their work than those working in other sectors, the size and culture of their organisations also means that many feel able to respond quickly to issues as they arise:

*Flexibility, autonomy, lack of hierarchy, being close to the grassroots and making a difference*

*Having the time to spend with people and not being dictated to my targets/ expectations from private sector*

*It is interesting and we don't get caught up in bureaucratic policies and staffing levels that are so frustrating in the NHS or LAs*

*Having a lot of autonomy to develop the project, working with a great team and all the fantastic children and young people I work with.*

### **3.1.6 Colleagues and team-working**

1 in 6 respondents highlighted the importance of their colleagues, with many highlighting their colleagues’ commitment and supportiveness, camaraderie and fun as well as the positive feeling they get from being part of a great team:

*The sense of doing something worthwhile, working around committed and interesting people.*

*I love the working environment and atmosphere at work. I also love working along side people and enjoy being able to give them the support that they need.*

*Fellow staff and the extraordinary work they do with some of the UK's most vulnerable (yet talented) people.*

*I really like my work, my boss, my co-workers, and just about everything else*

*Working with creative, values-driven people that want to do a good job, and do what they do really well for the people we're here for.*

### **3.1.7 Supportive organisations and good working conditions**

Supportive organisations were also rated highly by several respondents, in particular when someone had been through a difficult period. Positive organisational policies were also important to many, in particular around work-life balance and flexible working:

*Interesting and challenging and flexible around my family commitments.*

*Supportive around my health condition*

*I really like the way the organisation consults all of its staff regarding any changes, local or national, it's very inclusive and respectful of staff and people using services.*

### **3.1.8 Third sector 'values'**

Over 30 respondents also felt that the 'ethos' or 'values' of their organisations was an important element of their job, as they were able to work in both a field and in a way that fitted with their own values:

*The sense that my job has an importance beyond the office walls, that together we're making a difference somehow*

*I like working for a charity because we prioritise the well-being of others over relatively arbitrary concerns such as expanding or making a profit.*

*The ethos of the organisation, enabling people to maximise their potential*

*I like feeling that I'm supporting and a part of work that makes a difference to people's lives, I can't imagine working for a project or organisation that wasn't involved in work that I could really believe in.*

*My job is focused on better outcomes for people not financial gain of a business. At the end of the day all the work that I do is to create a better life for people*

## **3.2 Worst aspects of working in the third sector**

A number of respondents skipped this question, or commented that they found it hard to think of things they did not like. Others raised very minor niggles.

However, the majority of respondents expressed concerns, particularly in the 3 key areas summed up by one respondent: *“Low pay, no personal development, low job security”*.

### **3.2.1 Low pay**

The issue of low pay was singled out by 124 respondents (18%) as the worst part of their job, not simply because pay rates were low but because people:

- Feel undervalued by their organisation
- Feel undervalued compared to those in other sectors
- Feel taken advantage of, particularly if on short-term or insecure contracts

*Long days, low pay*

*undervalued, underpaid, no benefits, temporary contracts, taken advantage of.*

*Low salaries and job security, low training opportunities, feeling undervalued in contrast to other sectors, especially public sector; risk aversion*

*Getting paid a lot less than I would if I were doing the same job as a council employee*

*As in most 3rd sector jobs hard work is rewarded by poor pay, barely enough to live on.*

*Treated like second class citizens by public sector. Have to work extremely hard with an increasing workload for the same money as funding has not changed over the last 6 years despite the cost of things personally going up.*

*I'm shocked that staff with actual responsibility for clients' wellbeing (like drivers) are only in the last few months being paid a living wage.*

### **3.2.2 Job security**

Although mentioned slightly less frequently, the area that seemed to cause the greatest concern and worry for respondents was the lack of job security.

90 individuals raised concerns around job security or the constant threat of redundancy, with another 15 mentioning more general concerns around not knowing whether funding would come through. The comments show that this is an area that causes real concern for staff:

*Almost permanently under notice of redundancy*

*Although Permanent regularly under notice of redundancy - this has been of over 4 years.*

*Uncertainty of funding. Every year we wait to find out if we've got the funding to keep my post.*

*Not knowing if I have a job at the end of each funding stream. It is very unsettling and even though you put it to the back of your mind it's always hanging over you!*

*Job security in Third Sector, it's funding funding funding - 12 to 18 months contracts, should be like 3 to 5 years for the project / work to develop and be a success.*

### **3.2.3 Short-term or temporary contract issues**

Tied into funding and job security are the additional pressures felt by those on short-term or temporary contracts and freelancers, who feel that they miss out on many benefits and are exposed to even more job insecurity than the average third sector worker. Short-term contracts are likely to be here to stay due to the nature of third sector funding and short life-span projects, but these staff should not feel excluded or less valued:

*Poorly paid, short term contract, no sick pay, no pension, very few prospects*

*fixed term contract, stressing about what next half way through your contract rather than focusing on work at hand*

*I am only employed on a freelance basis and therefore my position is insecure and unpredictable. I don't really feel acknowledged as a 'proper' staff member. I get no pay if I'm sick; no pension; hol pay etc. I love the work but it's a struggle to maintain moral at times. Very stressfull!!*

### **3.2.4 Funding pressures**

Linked strongly to job security were concerns around funding, particularly:

- short-term funding, and
- delays in hearing about funding decisions

103 respondents mentioned funding concerns and public sector cuts, while some respondents complained that constantly chasing funding took up too much time and was one of the worst aspects of their work

*The continual funding applications & short term contracts.*

*Long term financial uncertainty. Elements of a hand to mouth mentality despite long term financial planning.*

*The increasing work load and the lack of money, both in terms of wages and general infrastructure. This in turn effects stress and moral.*

*I've worked in the third sector for 15 years now, and the relentless, continual, search for funding is really beginning to get me down - it's demoralising feeling that all you are doing is*

*fundraising, rather than doing the work you've raised the funds to do! This is part of the reason I will be leaving the third sector later this year to train for a new career in the public sector*

A number of respondents highlighted that while budgets shrink, the pressure to meet ambitious targets has been ratcheted up:

*The pressure of increased external demands from local authorities and other commissioning bodies, while the funds required to meet these demands are steadily depleting. The commissioners need and demand more from us while they are cutting their own budgets.*

*Quality of service provision seems to be very much secondary to meeting financial targets - at the cost to the people who are being supported and those who believe in giving a high standard of service provision.*

### **3.2.5 Large workloads, long hours**

The third sector has often been seen as a place where pay is low, but at least people have a good work-life balance. The findings from this research seem to challenge this assumption, with many respondents saying that they work long hours.

A number of respondents said that working extra unpaid hours is taken for granted in some organisations: *"You work hard for very poor pay. There's an unspoken expectation to work extra hours"*.

Other comments around workload included:

*Pressures from the organisation to meet unnecessary targets*

*Not finishing work on time...most days*

*Unreasonable demands and expectations constantly put upon me.*

*workload can be stressful sometimes*

*We try to do too much with existing resources*

*Often too much work to be done than time allows so work taken home*

Several respondent's comments also show that variety is not always a good thing, as many staff are expected to pick up too many work strands, leading to impossible workloads:

*My job is so varied and I feel tasks just get added and added to the point where it is hard to finish anything or prioritise workload so I feel constantly frustrated.*

*Variety- being involved in lots of different things sometimes takes me away from things I should be doing*

Some respondents also felt that time was not managed as well as it could be, but wasted on things such as *"Too many pointless, purposeless meetings"* or *"unnecessary and pointless paperwork"* - although that is of course highly subjective.

### 3.2.6 Difficult, challenging work

Many highlight that the work they do can be difficult, frustrating, challenging and “very demanding and can be very emotionally draining. can be unpredictable.”

Some respondents find it difficult to stay upbeat if there is a lack of progress with their clients, while a few recognised that while clients are usually what makes the job worthwhile there can be challenges.

Primarily respondents feel pressure as they do not have the time and resources to support their clients properly: “The constant cuts resulting in less resources to do a good job for these young people.”

### 3.2.7 Bureaucracy and unrealistic targets

While a number of respondents praised the autonomy they have in their jobs as one of the best things about working in the third sector, for others the “Red tape and bureaucracy” is one of the worst things, and something the sector is not immune to.

In a few cases this was attributed to management (and micro-management) practices but more often it was simply due to due **external** factors and **external pressure to demonstrate value**:

*The frustrating times when your work is delayed or held back or limited by external forces, e.g. government, waiting for decisions to be made, other charities trying to impose their own agenda and disregard yours, etc.*

*Project reports and evaluations that insist on hard measurable outcomes for immeasurable person centred focussed work*

### 3.2.8 Poor career progression and little investment in staff development

Key areas of complaint were around career progression. While the small size of many organisations in the third sector means that there is inevitably less scope for career progression within the organisation, respondents wanted to see more investment in training and in developing the skills of existing staff.

*Pressure on funding means only free training opportunities can realistically be taken up. Career progression in a small organisation is virtually a non-starter.*

*Lack of career progression and job security and employee benefits, such as enhanced maternity pay or pension scheme.*

*My type of work is in short supply in the third sector. Opportunities for career development are slim, and I am concerned about my chances of finding anything else (in any sector) should I leave these job, voluntarily or otherwise.*

*Learning opps are there if u actively seek them but formal training not so from current employer. This is short sighted as previous third sector employers viewed as essential.*

*Personal development and training – it's there if I want it (the board do encourage) but I never have the time*

*We can only access training which is free, which restricts our knowledge*

### **3.2.9 Management and leadership concerns**

A number of respondents complained about poor management, both from managers and executives, but also boards. Several respondents were concerned that the culture or management practices went against the organisation's values.

Comments included:

*Lack of care and value of staff which contradicts organisational core values*

*Management not taking on their full responsibility - passing it onto the lower positions. Not promoting company's values - saying the opposite of them to the staff and the way sometimes management speak to the employees.*

*Lack of leadership in the organisation. No control over staff, some people take the piss*

*In the organisation I work in, there seems to be a lack of good communication and planning. Even though the financial situation is difficult, I still feel a lot of money is wasted through too many meetings etc. Also, certain departments seem to be 'favoured'.*

*Middle management is poor and unprofessional and higher management and Board seems unaccountable and non-transparent. Communication is very poor and high turnover of staff is very disturbing*

*Many charities, particularly those providing services to disabled people, while presenting a caring and 'politically correct' facade, are very old-fashioned and 'vertical' in their management style, and do not allow staff much freedom or initiative (or respect). .*

More importantly - and perhaps easier for the sector to address - is that most complaints stemmed not from mismanagement but from staff feeling under-appreciated and that their work is not recognised, or from poor communication:

*poor management communication*

*lack of recognition from bosses*

*the work we do isn't recognised by management*

### **3.2.10 Undervalued by stakeholders and partners**

One issue, raised by 3% of respondents, is that their work is made more difficult by those outside the sector who see charities and other sector bodies as less

professional or as less valuable. This is perhaps an area to be addressed by intermediary organisations:

*Funding challenges and working with statutory partners who don't treat us like equals.*

*Working alongside other professionals who view third sector working as less valuable than their profession - ie; health practitioners, teachers, social workers...*

*Being taken for granted by stakeholders*

*The attitude to third sector organisations within local authorities and other public bodies is often patronising and dismissive. Given that most of our work is picking up the pieces of things that they could and should be doing better, this makes me very angry.*

*Being treated as a second class citizen by public sector partners e.g. LA's, NHS etc*

*Feeling that compare to the business world our job is totally undervalued by the government and society in general.*

*For the professionals (Health & Social Care) to take the 3rd sector seriously and treat us properly as partners*

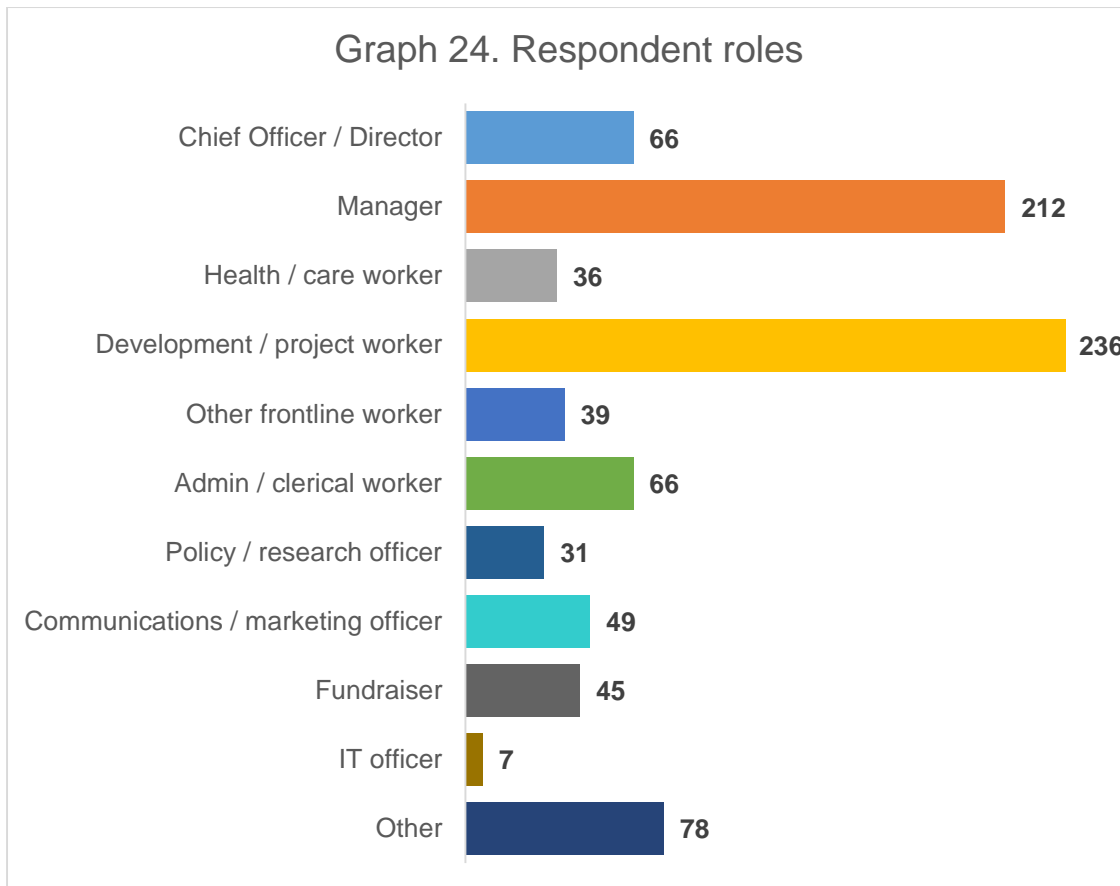
## **4 Respondent profile**

### **4.1 Respondent Roles**

45% of respondents were development or project workers, health and care workers, support workers, or other frontline workers including drivers and retail staff.

A third of respondents (35%) were in managerial or executive positions.

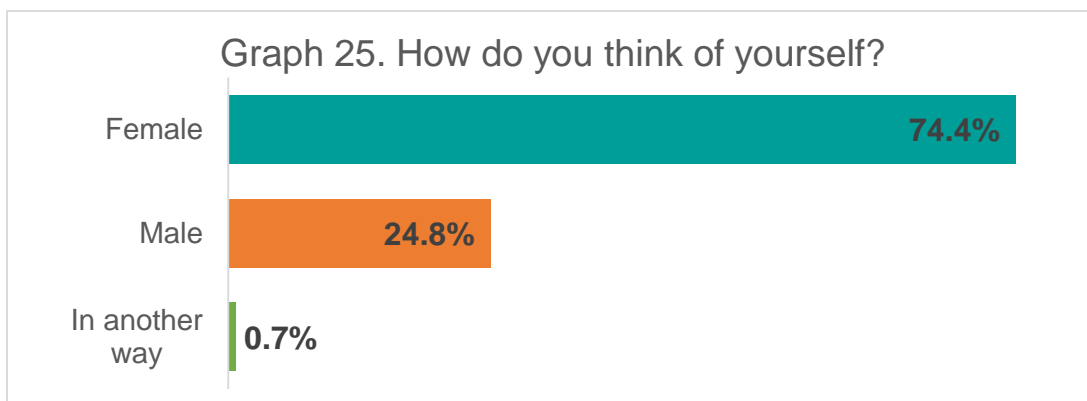
The rest of respondents (30%) were in office-based roles, such as administration, fundraising, policy and communications.

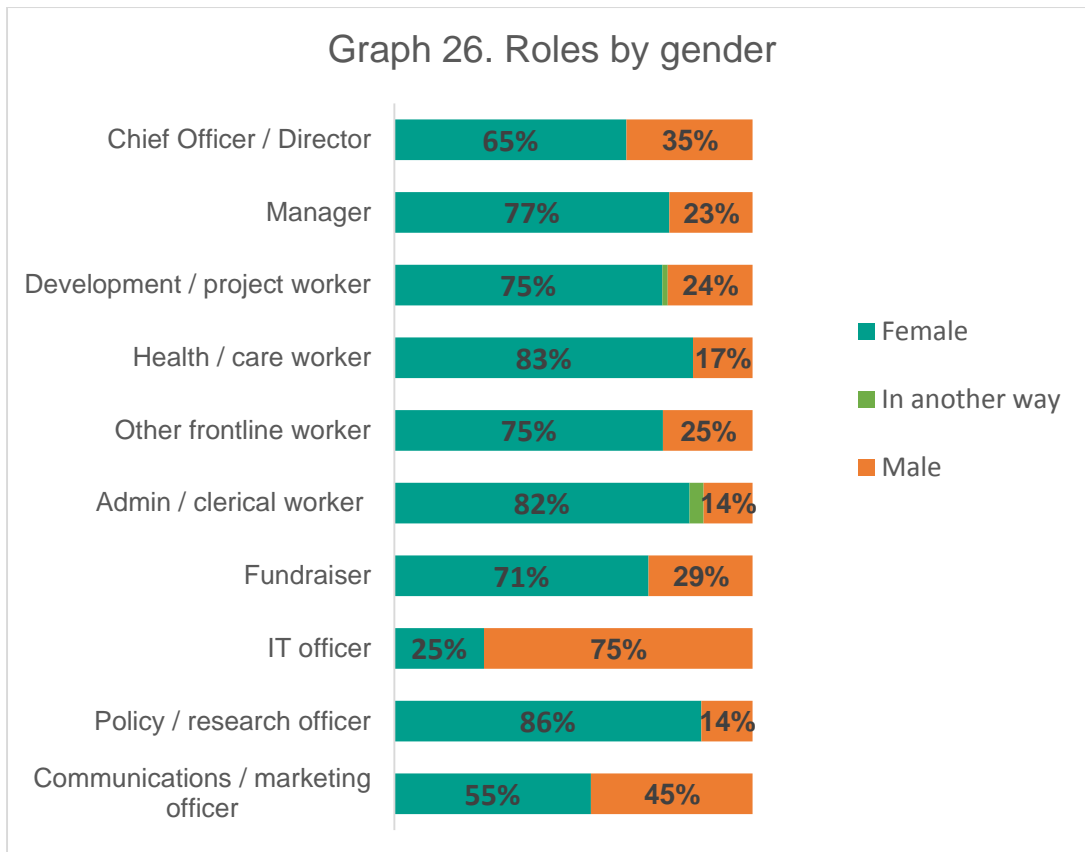


## 4.2 Gender

74% of respondents were female, which is slightly higher than the 64% estimated for the wider sector.

There were no significant differences between the answers given by male and female respondents, but some differences in terms of gender and job roles. IT officers and communications officers were predominantly male, while policy and administration officers were predominantly female. Other roles were generally in the same ratio as the survey respondents, but while managers were split 77:23 female to male, Chief Executives and Directors had a higher proportion of males, with a 65:35 female to male ratio.





### 4.3 Respondents' field of work

Top three areas of work for respondents:

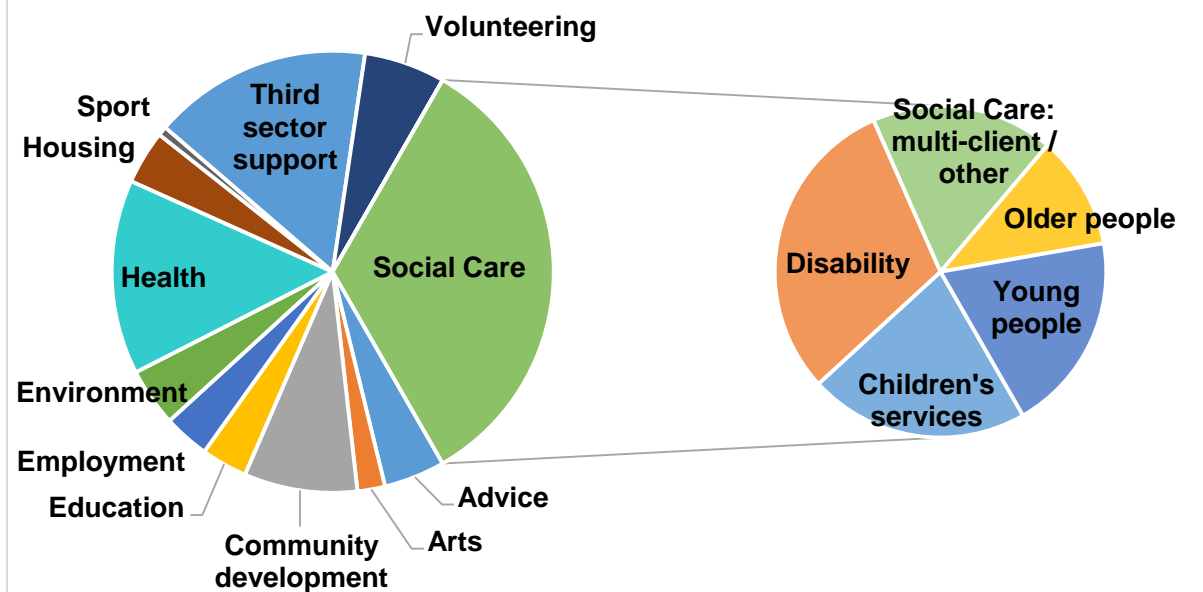
- Social care
- Health
- third sector support

Respondents worked across a wide range of sub-sectors, broadly reflecting the key employment areas but showing some divergence from the sector's overall workforce – see Graph 32 on page 37.

This is likely to be due to a combination of the following factors: the channels used to distribute the survey, the fact the survey was online and therefore more accessible to office-based staff, and that people in some type of roles and activities may be more likely to fill in surveys like this.

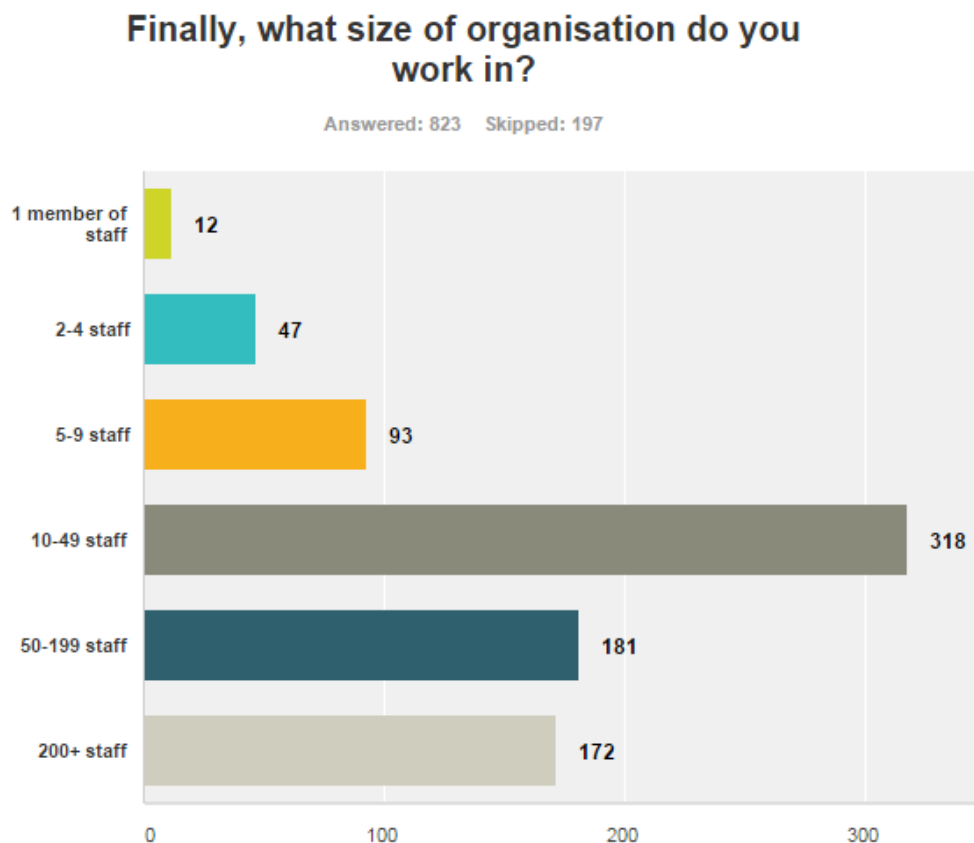
From the graph below we can see that while Social Care dominates with 30% of respondents this is still slightly below social care's 42% share of the overall workforce. Conversely, third sector support bodies make up only a small part of the sector, but employ 14% of respondents.

Graph 27. Respondents' field of work



#### 4.4 Size of organisation

Respondents came from all sizes of organisation, with most employed in medium sized organisations that have between 10 and 200 staff.



## 5 Appendix – About the Third Sector’s Workforce

### 5.1 The sector’s people

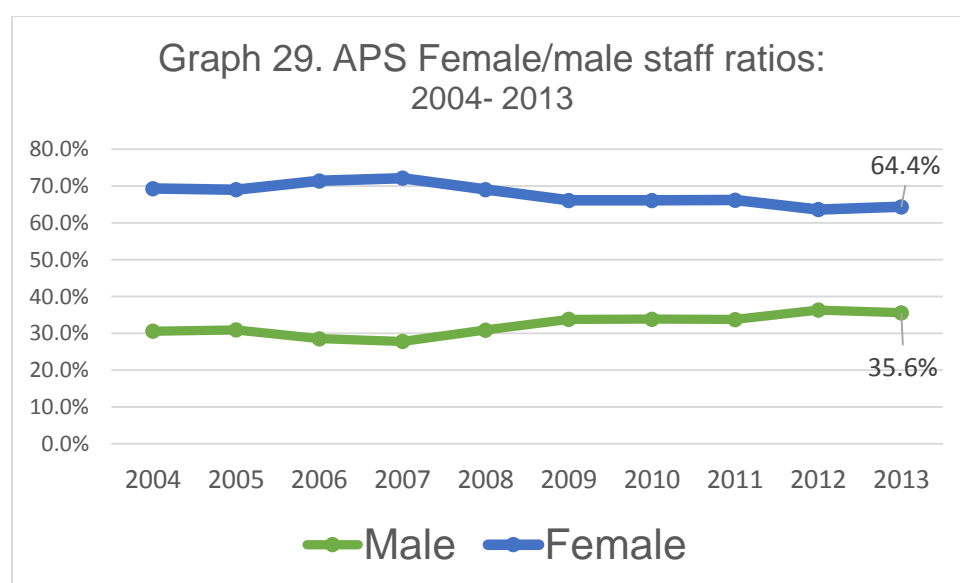
The third sector employs an estimated 138,000 people (headcount) or 83,350 Full Time Equivalent workers. The third sector workforce is comparable to that of the NHS, Scotland’s largest single employer with 153,000 staff.

The sector is supported by an estimated 250,000 trustees who manage and steer each organisation, with 7 trustees per organisation on average. 1.3 million people formally volunteer with organisations, providing 126 million hours of support.

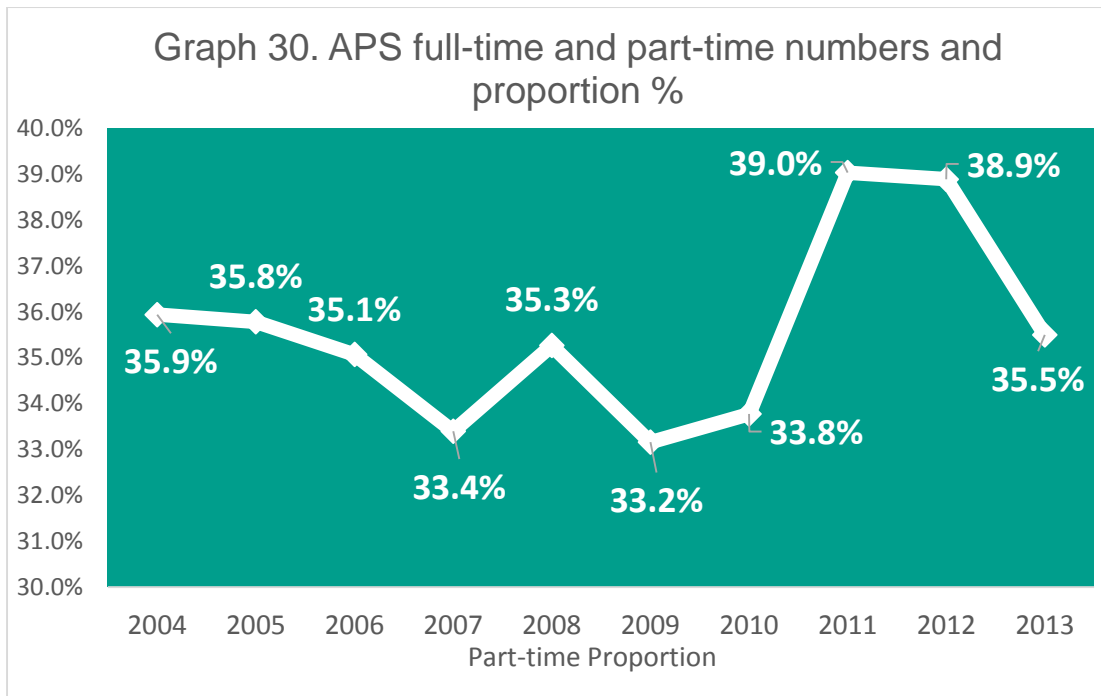
|            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| Paid staff | 138,000   |
| Trustees   | 250,000   |
| Volunteers | 1,300,000 |

### 5.2 What does the paid workforce look like?

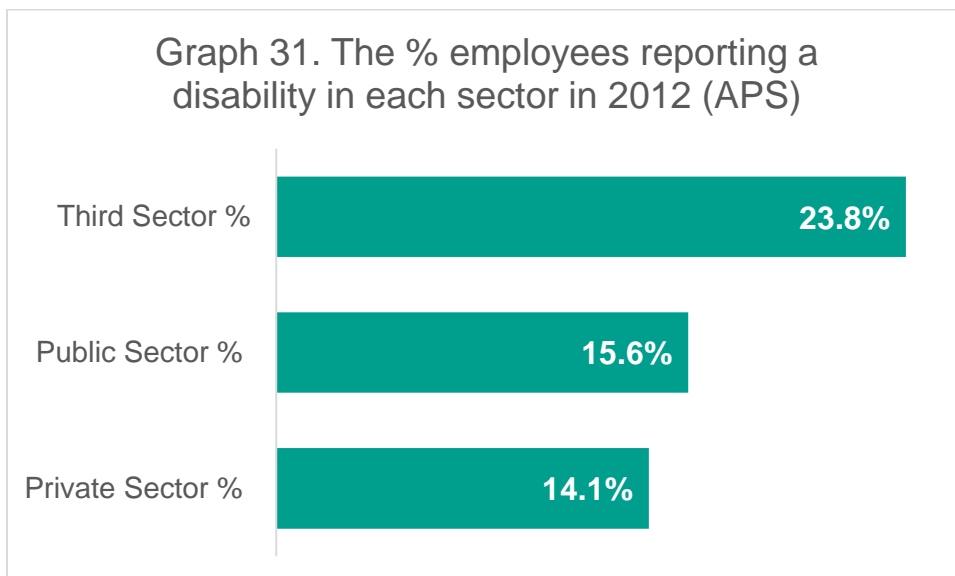
The third sector’s workforce is dominated by women. According to the Annual Population Survey (AP) the ratio is 64:36 or approximately two-thirds female.



The sector’s workforce is around 2/3 full-time and 1/3 part-time – part-time employment rose sharply with the funding cuts of 2010-11 but has now dropped back to previous levels.



The third sector employs a far higher proportion of people with disabilities than the public or private sectors.



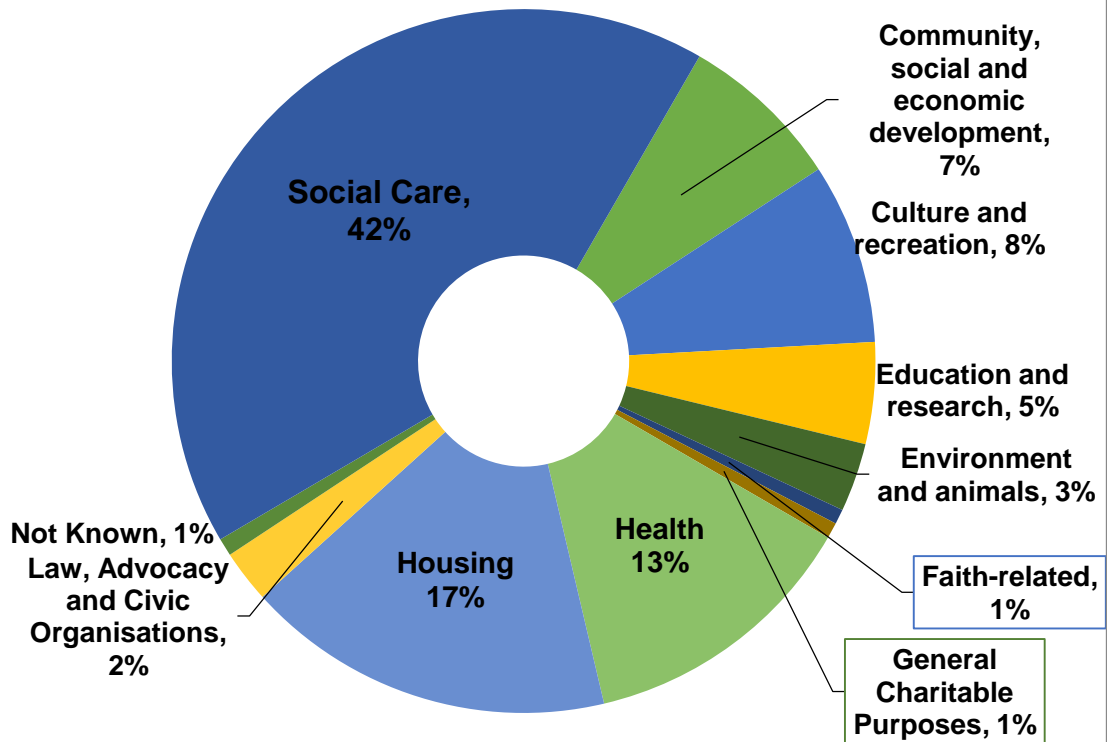
### 5.3 Where do paid staff work?

**27% of third sector organisations employ staff.**

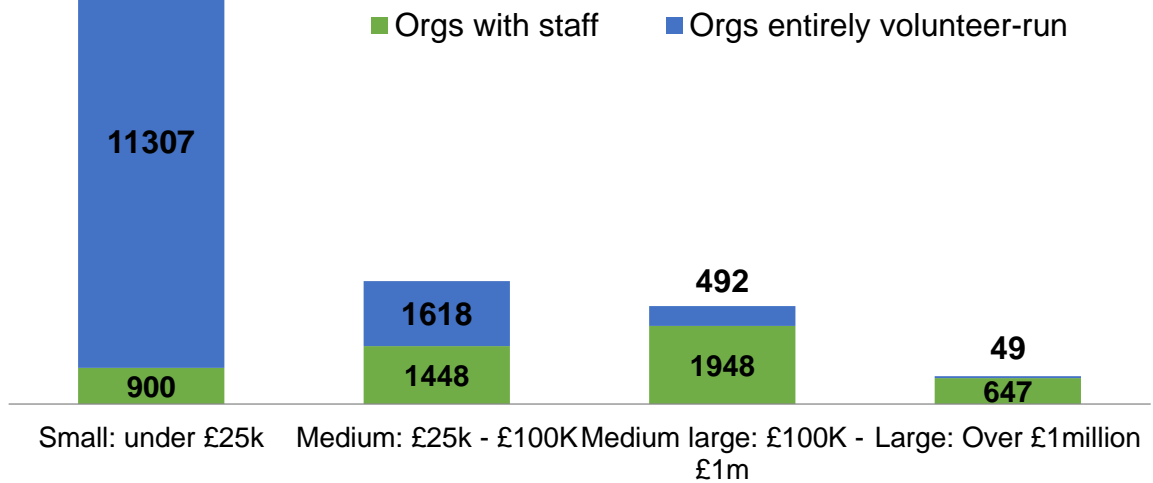
Three-quarters of the sector's paid workers are employed by organisations with over £1million turnover, but paid staff can be found working in all sizes of organisation

Paid staff are employed across all types of organisations, with the bulk of the sector's workforce employed in social care, followed by housing and health.

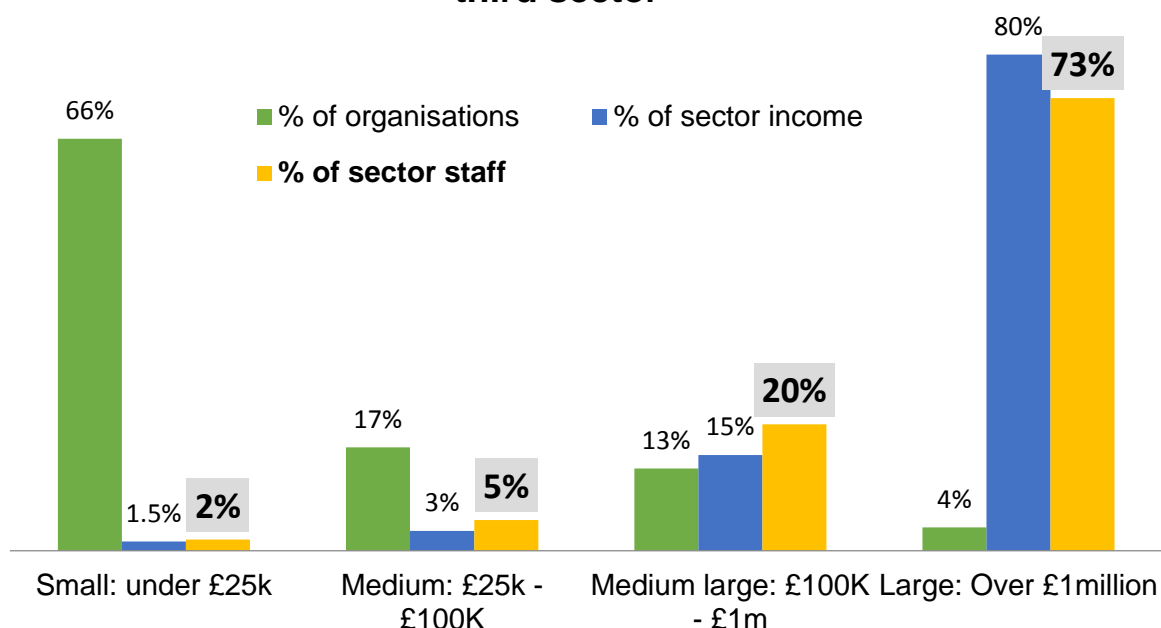
**Graph 32. Share of paid workforce by sub-sector**



**Graph 33. Number of Organisations with and without paid staff**



**Graph 34. Income and staff distribution of regulated third sector**



#### 5.4 The third sector's top 20 employers

The table below shows that the top employers in the sector are dominated by social care providers, housing providers (particularly those providing supported accommodation) and organisations providing health care.

| Top 20 third sector employers                | Number of staff |
|--|-----------------|
| The Church Of Scotland including Cross Reach | 2,918           |
| Richmond Fellowship Scotland                 | 2,528           |
| Key Housing Association Limited              | 2,042           |
| Quarriers                                    | 1,950           |
| Cornerstone Community Care                   | 1,854           |
| Enable Scotland                              | 1,730           |
| Glasgow Housing Association                  | 1,537           |
| Bield Housing & Care                         | 1,211           |
| Turning Point Scotland                       | 1,099           |
| Capability Scotland                          | 1,075           |
| Sense Scotland                               | 1,041           |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| The National Trust for Scotland        | 993 |
| Alzheimer Scotland                     | 985 |
| Ark Housing Association                | 901 |
| Scottish Autism                        | 892 |
| Crossroads Caring Scotland             | 866 |
| Erskine Hospital                       | 844 |
| Mungo Foundation                       | 711 |
| Scottish Association For Mental Health | 706 |
| Aberlour Child Care Trust              | 685 |

## Contact

Ilse Mackinnon  
 Research Officer  
 E-mail: [ilse.mackinnon@scvo.org.uk](mailto:ilse.mackinnon@scvo.org.uk)  
 Tel: 0131 474 6159